

AIDS TO PUBLIC WORSHIP IN SCOTLAND 1800 - 1850

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I

WE begin this study of Aids to Public Worship in the first half of the nineteenth century in Scotland by reminding ourselves of the theory and practice of the previous century. Much could be said about that period, but it will not be necessary to go into detail. Most books on the eighteenth century worship of Scottish Presbyterianism are rather critical of the forms of service, but it is not at all easy to know what to say of the total situation. The general picture drawn by Grey Graham in his *The Social Life of Scotland in the 18th Century* is not so dark as is suggested by other writers, such as the author of *A Letter from a Blacksmith*. Take his description of one of the great "occasions," as the crowded communion services were often called.

The services were not seldom deeply impressive and picturesque when held in the open air, especially when the Tables were laid on trestles on the grass.

He describes the congregation, composed of farmers and ploughmen, women, old lairds, young lairds and so on. And he continues,

The minister clad in his bob-wig, blue or gray coat and cravat, spoke in that sing-song which rose in curious cadence in the air. Even the long drawn-out psalm tunes, although broken by each line being read or sung out in turn, rose plaintive and sweet from the throng of voices ; and the prayers, with their earnest, weeping pleading, came forth in a stillness broken only by sudden sighs and ejaculations, or the sharp cry of the curlew in the heather, and the song of the lark overhead.¹

One may believe that there were times of which that was a true enough picture, though it sounds very idyllic and imaginative. But if we set against that some of the details given elsewhere, we must doubt whether Grey Graham's picture is quite so generally true as we might hope. Thus the Blacksmith writes,

I cannot help thinking, that all the rational people of our communion,

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 308.

must be shocked with the indecencies, and follies, that attend the administration of our Lord's Supper . . . In a word, in this *sacred* assembly there is an odd mixture of religion, sleep, drinking, courtship and a confusion of sexes, ages and characters.¹

This pamphlet is sometimes (as by C. G. McCrie) decried as if it were an episcopalian attack comparable to *Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*, but it is generally attributed to Dr. John Witherspoon, minister of the Laigh Kirk, Paisley, 1757-1768. And it remains true that many of this man's strictures are supported by other writers.

This contrast is mentioned in order to show the difficulty in coming to a firm judgment. But fortunately there are some things which stand out clearly, and a few of these may now be referred to.

For one thing, the reading of the Bible in public worship was sorely neglected. Indeed this part of corporate public worship was in many places practically non-existent. The minister on occasion did lecture on a passage, which involved the reading of the text, verse by verse with commentary and application. But what had in earlier days been lections were no longer used, and the demand of the Westminster Directory for the reading of a chapter from each Testament in course had been forgotten.

It is interesting to note what is said by Alexander Gerard, who was Professor of Divinity in Marischal College, Aberdeen, from 1760 to 1771, and in King's College from 1771 to 1795. He was succeeded in the latter chair by his son Gilbert, who edited this book. It was called *The Pastoral Care*, and contained his lectures on Pastoral Theology.

Reading the Scriptures seems to be so necessary and essential a part of Christian worship, that the omission of it is the most faulty defect in the present practice of our Church. Yet so great is the perverseness and weak bigotry of many, that in some places it would almost create a schism to attempt to introduce it . . . I know nothing, however, which better deserves a man's running the risk of giving offence, than restoring the public reading of the Scriptures.²

The Blacksmith made the same point.³

Other things can be no more than mentioned. The praise, consisting in most places of psalms alone was too often far from being a joyful sound, and the facts can be found in Millar Patrick's *Four Centuries of Scottish*

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 7-9. Edition of 1759.

² *Op. cit.*, London, 1799. p. 369.

³ *Letter*. pp. 3-6.

Psalmody.¹ The prayers in many cases developed into doctrinal discourses, or attacks on particular sins or sinners, or the conveyance of information to the Almighty. And finally the conduct of the service of the Lord's Supper was, as we have seen, frequently criticised and condemned.

On the other hand it should be remembered that in this same century there were brave attempts to improve matters. The Relief Church, so frequently ahead of other bodies, was the first to consider the adoption of hymns; others did their best, in spite of prejudice, to make the use of the Lord's Prayer more general. In consequence we must believe that the eighteenth century, especially as it progressed towards the nineteenth, shows a real desire for improvement in public worship.

One of the remedies proposed for want of form and of finish in worship was the provision of some kind of service book. Professor Gerard for example said that the minister should "contrive his prayers so that they may be fit to affect (the people) with devotion and to raise their minds in the exercise of it."² He gives directions for the achievement of this object. The minister should prepare his prayers with as great care and regularity as his sermons; he should compose prayers for occasions, gaining a variety of them and mastering them. Or he should collect and write down words of adoration, confession and supplication and so on, as he comes across them in reading and especially in the Bible. But, Gerard goes on,

it might however, without the imposition of forms, be effectually remedied by a proper Directory (such as our own is in some measure), containing either a variety of forms any of which might be used, or a large selection of materials for prayer, out of which a choice may be made, put into the hands of the people, recommended to their study, and rendered by this means sufficiently known to them.

We shall find this suggestion repeated again and again, and indeed carried out.

Another suggestion for improving worship often made in the eighteenth century was a more frequent celebration of the Lord's Supper. John Erskine, D.D., minister of New Greyfriars, Edinburgh, from 1758 to 1767 and of Old Greyfriars from 1767 to 1803, published a book in Kilmarnock in 1783 with the title, *An Attempt to Promote the Frequent Dispensing of the Lord's Supper*. This was written in support of the idea of four Communion and four Preparatory Fasts in each year, i.e., instead of the yearly or even less frequent great "occasions."

¹ pp. 105 ff.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 369-370.

Another book to the same effect was written by John Mason, pastor of the Scots Presbyterian Church in the City of New York. It was published in Edinburgh in 1798 under the title, *Letters on Frequent Communion*. He claims the support of Dr. Erskine and others, and argues that the Westminster Directory prescribes frequent communion and opposes the public fasts and thanksgivings. His arguments are not very original, but he says some good things. E.g.,

No opinion can be more dishonourable or dangerous than this, that reformation being already achieved, we have nothing to do but to tread quietly on in the track of precedent. Godliness is not the nursing of tradition.¹

These references should show that the later eighteenth century, though in many ways still below what we would regard as reasonable standards of worship, did show some rays of light beginning to brighten the comparative darkness.

II

And so we come to look directly at the Aids to Public Worship which actually appeared during the first half of the nineteenth century in Scotland. There can be no claim here to completeness of reference. But we shall consider the most important volumes, first describing them individually.

The first was *The Scotch Minister's Assistant*, which appeared in Inverness in 1802. It was an anonymous publication, but was written by Harry Robertson, D.D., minister of Kiltearn from 1776 to 1815. The book was re-issued under the title *The Presbyterian Minister's Assistant*, in 1822 in Aberdeen almost *verbatim*, with a brief note on the reason for a new edition, "under a strong conviction of its utility, both as a guide to the Student in Divinity, and as a help to the Devotions of the private Christian." The full title is, "The Scotch Minister's Assistant; or a Collection of Forms, for celebrating the Ordinances of Marriage, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper according to the usage of the Church of Scotland; with suitable Devotions for Church and Family Worship." It contains three Forms for Marriage; Forms for Baptism with six Discourses; Six Discourses for Fencing Communion Tables; six Addresses for Table Services at the Lord's Supper; two Exhortations to the Communicants at the Conclusion of the Solemn Action; four sets of Prayer before and after Sermon; one set of Prayer for a Fast Day in time of war, before and

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 10.

after Sermon ; Prayers at the Communion ; two Prayers for a Blessing on the Elements, and two at the Conclusion of the Solemn Service ; Prayer at the Ordination of a Minister ; Family Prayers, three sets morning and evening, but only one set for the Lord's Day ; one Prayer for Visitation of the Sick, and one Prayer " when death visits a Family."

The "Advertisement " which opens the book states that the author composed the prayers and addresses for his own use, and under the impression that they may be found calculated to assist the devotions of the well-disposed reader, and likewise to gratify the curiosity of those of a different communion, who may be desirous to know the religious forms of our church, they are now committed to the press. He feels that it is a considerable disadvantage that there are no forms prescribed by the Church of Scotland for celebrating Marriage, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The minister has no other assistance than the few general instructions of the Directory. "As no attempt has hitherto been made by any Minister of the Church of Scotland to remedy this obvious inconvenience, the author flatters himself that the following work, with all its imperfections, will be favourably received by his younger brethren." He adds that he would be glad to see a more perfect work on the same plan.

In 1829 a book was published in Saint John, New Brunswick, with the title, *Prayers adapted for Public Worship, the Domestic Altar, Sunday Schools and the Chamber of Sickness and Death. To which are added Prayers for the use of Young Persons, and Graces before and after Meals, with a Conclusion recommendatory of Prayer as a Christian Duty.* The author was George Burns, D.D., minister of St. Andrew's Church there, and later minister of Tweedsmuir and after 1843 of Corstorphine Free Church. There is a two-page Advertisement in which the writer says his purpose is to supply a long and greatly felt want, especially in remote and scattered settlements where in the absence of regular clergy laymen conduct Divine Service, but also for Sunday Schools and Family Worship. He says that with regard to the public prayers,

he had never the most remote intention that they should be read in churches by licenced preachers or regularly ordained clergymen. He is well aware that the genius of the Ecclesiastical Constitution of Scotland is quite hostile to such a practice, but at the same time there is nothing in the Directory for National Worship which condemns the occasional use of set forms to a certain extent, even by the accredited functionaries of the Church, in the devotional exercises of the sanctuary.

This book contains six prayers for the commencement and six for the conclusion of Public Worship. There are family prayers for each morning and evening of the week, four prayers at the opening and four at the "demission" of the Sunday School, and other forms as indicated in the title. We shall be concerned only with prayers for public worship, the twelve of which take up sixty pages, an average of five pages each, which means about 1500 words each on the average. The Lord's Prayer appears at the end of the concluding prayer in two cases. The only form of Benediction given is, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." Here it will be noticed there is no Communion Service, perhaps because the book was not really meant for the clergy.

The third book to be noticed is that of Andrew George Carstairs, D.D., minister of Anstruther Wester from 1805 to 1838. It is entitled, *The Scottish Communion Service: with the Public Services for the Fast Day, Saturday and Monday before and after Communion*, and was published in 1829 in Edinburgh and London. There is a short preface in which the author explains the reason for the various services in connection with the Communion. The book itself contains full services for the Fast Day forenoon and afternoon, Saturday, Sabbath forenoon, Sabbath evening, and Monday. All except the Sabbath forenoon and the Monday services are on the same pattern—psalm, prayer, sermon, prayer, paraphrase, blessing. The Monday service is similar, only having an additional paraphrase, prayer and sermon. The Communion service is of course much longer, and gives forms for five table services, each with an address, with in addition the sermon, address from the pulpit and concluding address. It is noticeable that in no case is any scripture lesson referred to.

Next we mention the edition of Knox's Liturgy published by John Cumming, M.A., minister of the Scotch Church, Crown Court, London, published in London and Edinburgh, 1840. The Preface is interesting. He says the Liturgy of Knox is "the *beau ideal* of a service," as being "the combination of the two, viz. the *Authoritative* injunction of the use of so much of the liturgy every service, and withal scope for extemporaneous prayer before and after the sermon."¹ He criticises the present service as "justly chargeable with nakedness," and a "too onerous requirement" is imposed on the officiating presbyter, and he thinks that for the great mass the partial use of a form would be truly valuable.² He suggests that there should be more respect for the house of prayer,³ that people should

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. v.

² p. ix.

³ p. xiii.

stand instead of sit during praise,¹ and that organs would be useful in many cases.² If Knox's Liturgy is not adopted, we should conform more closely to the Directory than is generally the case.³ Particularly valuable is the use of the Apostles' Creed.⁴ Cumming was responsible also for an edition of Psalms and Paraphrases with Prayers and Services from the Book of Common Order, published in London in 1848.

In 1843 William Liston, minister of Redgorton from 1812 to 1864, published in Edinburgh *The Service of the House of God, according to the Practice of the Church of Scotland*. This was intended to assist the devotion and direct the meditations of those who were necessarily detained from public worship; and to form a Directory to young Clergymen on their first entering on their official duties. The preface emphasises the need for such a book, especially for those unable to come to church. He says he knows of no earlier book of this kind apart from the two editions of *The Scotch Minister's Assistant*. In the first part there are services for three Sundays, each consisting of Morning Prayer, Lecture, Intermediate Prayer, Sermon, Public or Concluding Prayer. Each service is really composite in place of the two normal services of morning and afternoon. The second part includes services for Preparation Sabbath, Fast Day, Communion Sabbath, Ordination, Baptism, and Marriage.

Next we note *Forms for Public Worship in the Church of Scotland*, by Alexander Brunton, D.D., minister of New Greyfriars, Edinburgh, 1803 to 1809, and of the Tron Church from 1809 and Professor of Oriental Languages in Edinburgh University from 1813. This was published in 1848. It contained services for the First Sabbath of the Year—the first appearance of such a service—ordinary services for four Sabbaths, special services for Parochial Visiting, Baptism, and the usual Communion services, and also for Particular Services, which include the licensing of probationers, Ordination and Induction of a minister; Ordination of Elders and a Marriage Service. In each case the author provides praise, prayers, sermons and benediction. Dr. Brunton says that all the sermons had been delivered in the Tron Church.

This was the last of the service books published before 1850, but in 1848 the Duke of Argyll wrote a small book called *Presbytery Examined*, which criticised the standards of worship in Scotland. The following year an overture to the General Assembly asked that measures should be taken to publish a book of devotion that would be useful for persons in remote

¹ p. xiv.

² p. xviii.

³ p. xx.

⁴ p. xxiv.

districts of the country and in the Colonies who were unable to attend public worship.

The next decade saw a great number of publications dealing with the subject. Among these we should mention *The Ministers' Directory*, by James Anderson, published in Edinburgh in 1856; the pamphlet *Spots on the Sun*, by A. Maitland Makgill Crichton, Edinburgh, 1857; Robert Lee's *Prayers for Public Worship*, Edinburgh, 1857; Andrew R. Bonar's *Presbyterian Liturgies*, Edinburgh, 1858. The last and perhaps others too were influenced by *Eutaxia*, or *A Chapter in Liturgies*, by Charles W. Baird, published in New York in 1855, and in London, with preface and appendix by Thomas Binney, in 1857. We should also note the work published by authority of the General Assembly, *Prayers for Social and Family Worship*, the first edition of which appeared in 1859. There were also a good many articles in periodicals, reviews, and pamphlets. And we must mention last the formation of the Church Service Society in 1865.

III

Let us now attempt a survey of the way in which these publications sought to carry out their general purpose, which was to improve the standards of public worship. One frequent suggestion is a fuller obedience to the recommendations of the Westminster Directory. Many of these were being ignored, as we have seen. Some felt that the Directory was insufficient. *The Scotch Minister's Assistant* speaks of "the few general instructions of the Directory," which did not overcome "the obvious inconvenience" caused by the lack of a detailed service book.

But let us look at the services individually, and first take the ordinary Sunday service. In some cases the forenoon and afternoon services were given separately, sometimes as in Liston's book joined together. The general order of the service varies very little, consisting as a rule of psalm, prayer, lecture or sermon, prayer, psalm or paraphrase. Some books however, such as *The Scotch Minister's Assistant* and Dr. Burns merely provide the prayers and do not suggest any particular order.

As to the prayers, they are nearly all of inordinate length, at least to our idea. Thus *The Scotch Minister's Assistant* gives two prayers for each service; in the first set that before sermon has about 1800 words, and that after sermon about 1500. Burns is even longer in some instances; in his first set of prayers the prayer at the commencement of public worship continues over five and a half pages of small print, each with about 400 words. The prayers of Liston and of Brunton are however rather shorter

The content of the prayers covers the usual subjects. The first prayer usually contains adoration of God and contemplation of his majesty, confession of sins and supplication for forgiveness and for grace. The second includes prayer for blessing on the sermon and on the whole service and intercessions for the extension of the Kingdom, for the land and its rulers, and for the needy. Thanksgiving appears in one or the other. Gerard in *The Pastoral Care* says that prayer should be ordered thus—adoration proper, followed by praise and thanksgiving, petitions for mercy, confession and petition for pardon, petition for all good things for ourselves and for others. And he adds,

But in fact there is no necessity for keeping these several parts distinct. It is better to intermix them through the whole of prayer.¹

There are still many today who follow that advice! But as a matter of fact the prayers are usually well ordered in these books.

The language is largely that of Scripture, and, to quote Gerard again, "Every part of public prayer ought, as much as possible, to be expressed in the language of scripture." Sprott has suggested that much of the Scottish traditional liturgy is to be found in Matthew Henry's *Method of Prayer with Scripture Expressions Proper to be used under each Head*.² It is true that that work was widely used and that many editions appeared not only in England but also in Scotland after the first edition of 1710, and that it must have been well known in Scotland. But Henry's book is largely a collection of scriptural phrases, gathered under such heads as Adoration of God and Address to Him, Confession of Sin and Profession of Repentance, Petition and Supplication for the Good Things which we stand in need of, and Intercession for others. But surely a minister with a good knowledge of the Bible might easily gather the sentences himself and come to the same forms without even knowing Henry's book. Incidentally, Gerard complains that texts are often "misquoted, amplified and mixed together," and warns his students on the point.

As to the Scripture lessons, few of the books of the period say anything about them. Gerard, for example, who as we saw urged the necessity of reading them, yet gives as the regular order of service this, Psalm, Prayer, (Psalm), Lecture or Sermon, Prayer, Paraphrase, Blessing, not mentioning the reading of the Bible. Brunton indeed is the only one to give a place to "A Portion of Scripture," but that may be because he gives a fuller outline of the service than the others. The praise also is seldom mentioned,

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 374.

² In an article, "The Public Prayers of Yesterday," published in a newspaper about 1891.

perhaps for the same reason, though Brunton prints the psalms and paraphrases in full.

The benediction or blessing is given in a few cases. Burns prints it only once, in the form, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen." Brunton varies the form from service to service, usually saying "you," so that it is really a blessing rather than a prayer.

Next we examine the Communion Services. Burns gives none of these, perhaps because he did not intend the book to be used by ministers. But all the others deal with the forms for the whole Communion season. Robertson in *The Scotch Minister's Assistant* gives two sets of prayers, each with one prayer for "a blessing on the elements" and one "at the conclusion of the solemn service." These average two pages each. Liston is much fuller, giving forms for all the usual services. The Preparation and Fast Day services are of normal shape. The Communion Sabbath morning service gives morning prayer, sermon, intermediate or specific prayer, fencing of the tables, first Table service with consecration prayer, second third, fourth and fifth Table services, for which the earliest consecration prayer is to be used, exhortation or concluding address, prayer after the Communion, sermon, public or concluding Prayer. The consecration prayer has a kind of epiclesis with curious wording—"Sanctify with thy blessing so much of the elements as shall be used on this occasion, that, as the symbols of the Saviour's broken body and shed blood, they may prove refreshing, comfortable, and strengthening to every serious and devout user." It may be added that the prayers are long and the many addresses wearisome.

Brunton begins with a psalm and prayer, then a lesson, prayer with the Lord's Prayer, paraphrase, sermon, prayer, the Lord's Prayer, psalm, fencing of the tables, psalm during which the minister moves from the pulpit to the table, the institution of the Supper read, consecration prayer with thanksgiving, the manual acts (in which the minister's own communion is not mentioned), address resumed, psalm sung while communicants retire and second table is filled, then third table and so on, the minister returns to the pulpit and announces a psalm, exhortation, prayer, psalm and benediction. The prayers here are not so long as in some other books, but the sermons and addresses are certainly too wordy.

The use of the Lord's Prayer was slow to become general. As we have seen, Burns and Brunton are the only ones to mention its use, and it is not clear why Brunton mentions it twice in his communion service. It is curious to find that Dr. Andrew Thomson of St. George's, Edinburgh, in his *Lectures Expository and Practical on select portions of Scripture*,

published in two volumes in 1816, was very strongly opposed to its use. "We cannot reasonably suppose," he says,¹ "that our Saviour would prescribe to us, as a set form, a prayer so radically defective as not to acknowledge the necessity of dependence upon His atonement and righteousness," or "that He would intend the form of prayer which He gave to His disciples to be binding upon the practice of the Church in all succeeding ages." Hence he refused to recognise and use the Lord's Prayer "as a precise and stinted form of worship." Bishop Sage thought this was "fearful."² But the Prayer gradually came into wider use later in the nineteenth century.

The other services for which forms are provided are chiefly baptism, marriage and ordination. Robertson's book gives one full service for baptism, together with five additional baptism addresses. The order is—prayer, question to the "parent or sponsor"—"Do you present this child to be baptized, professing it to be your earnest desire that he (or she) may be admitted a member of the visible Church?" A discourse on the significance of baptism follows. Then the parent or sponsor holds up the child and takes the vows, by answering these questions—"Do you believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain the mind and will of God, and that the Confession of Faith and Catechism of this National Church are agreeable to, and founded upon, the Holy Scriptures; and are you sincerely desirous that your child should be baptized in this faith? Do you promise to train up your child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, in the knowledge of the grounds and principles of the Christian religion? and do you further engage, through divine assistance, and according to the best of your power, that your family shall serve the Lord?" This is followed by prayer which includes a petition for the sanctifying of the element of water, and for the inward baptism of the Holy Spirit. The prayer ends with the words, "Grant, O gracious God, that whatsoever guilt or pollution may cleave to this child, in consequence of his relation to the first Adam, may be effectually removed by the blood of Christ," not apparently through any effect of the baptism itself. The minister asks the name, and baptizes, sprinkling a little water on the face of the child, in the usual form. Thereafter there is a prayer for the child, for the parents, and for those present, that they may remember their own baptism.

Liston provides the opening or morning prayer and a sermon on the sacrament of baptism, nineteen pages long, each page of about 300 words. The author says that in church the usual practice is for the baptism to take

¹ *Op.cit.*, II. pp. 138 ff.

² See *Fundamental Charter of Presbytery*, pp. 352-5.

place after the sermon. The parent is to hold the infant while the minister asks whether the parent wishes baptism for the child, after which "the child is returned to the nurse and the vows are laid on the parent." Liston goes on—"It is, however, the practice with some clergymen, to make the parent continue to hold the child during the whole of the first address; but this practice is occasionally attended with inconvenience, from the noise which the child sometimes makes."¹ After the first question there is an address chiefly on the duties of the parent, ending with the parent's promise to fulfil the duties. Then come a prayer for a blessing on the service, the baptism itself, and the final prayer, which is in much the same terms as that of Robertson.

Brunton's baptismal service is much shorter, the whole covering only three pages, to which the intercession prayer is to be added. It begins with an address to the parent, ending with a profession of faith and a promise to perform the duties. There is a short prayer for the sanctification of "so much of the element of water as is used in this solemnity," then the baptism and the final prayer. The form for Baptism thus does not vary very much, and is not unlike the modern form in its general outline and content.

We may now turn to the marriage service. Robertson has this service at the beginning of his book. There is a short prayer followed by an exhortation. The parties join hands and the questions are put, and the minister pronounces them to be husband and wife. This is followed by a short prayer. Three forms are supplied.

Liston puts the marriage service last. He begins with a note on the necessity that the minister should see the certificate of proclamation of banns. There is a prayer, followed by an address. The parties join hands, and the minister does not ask questions, but merely makes a declaration—"You take this woman, whom you now hold by the hand . . . You take this man . . ." And goes right on to the words—"In the name of God, I now declare you to be married persons, and whom God uniteth let no man put asunder." A prayer for the parties ends the service. Liston ends with this note:

The above form is adapted to the circumstances in which the ceremony is generally administered in the ordinary ranks of life. But, although there ought to be no distinction of persons in relation to religious service, yet circumstances will occur, in the experience of every minister, where it may be left to the minister's own discretion to direct him to a more or less curtailed form of service.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 369.

Brunton also has the marriage service at the end of the book. He notes the necessity for the proclamation of banns, the certificate of which must be shown to the minister. The service begins with a short prayer, then a short address on the duties of marriage. The minister asks the parties if they engage to perform these duties, and bids them join hands. He asks for any objections, and if none is offered, says, "I declare you married persons—and whom God hath joined, let not man put asunder," and concludes with a short prayer and the benediction. It will be noticed that in these forms, the marriage ring does not appear, this being in conformity with the provisions of the Westminster Directory.

Next we look at the services for the ordination of a minister. Robertson's book contributes only the prayer. Liston gives a full service, consisting of a morning prayer, a sermon, a narrative, and the questions to the "presentee", who after answering them, kneels, and while the congregation stands, the presiding minister "pronounces the ordination prayer," laying his hand, as do all ordained ministers present, on the head of the person. Then the address to the minister and that to the people follow, and last comes the final prayer.

Brunton is fuller so far as legality is concerned. He quotes Act XII of the General Assembly of 1847, and explains the procedure required. The Presbytery meets in the vacant church, and the Moderator, after praise and prayer, preaches a sermon, a specimen of which is given. Then after a psalm, the narrative and the question, the minister is ordained and set apart by solemn prayer and imposition of hands by all ministers present. The minister and the people are addressed and the service finishes with prayer, praise and the benediction.

Liston provides an order for the ordination of elders, which contains the questions to the elders-elect, the ordination prayer, the address to the elders and that to the people, the right hand of fellowship being given after the blessing. Brunton too has a form for this purpose, giving here as elsewhere some directions as to procedure in the election. After sermon the minister reads a narrative, puts the prescribed questions and offers a very short prayer of about ninety words. Curiously the prayer asks for a blessing on him "whom we have now separated and set apart to the office of the eldership among this people," which looks as if ordination was regarded as being done by declaration and not by prayer. Liston is more regular as the prayer contains the setting-apart—"We especially pray that Thou wouldst pour down much of Thy Divine Spirit upon Thy servants whom we now set apart and ordain to an honourable office in Thy Vineyard."

IV

It is now time to bring this survey to a close. Some may feel that it should have gone further and included the decade 1850 to 1860. It is true that would have been of great interest and perhaps of value as showing how ideas progressed and indeed changed in emphasis. One difficulty however would have been the fact that in that decade, as we have already noted, many new volumes appeared, more in number than in the preceding half century, and the consequence would have been either a very long paper or what would have seemed too great compression. Further, more has already been written on these later service books than on the earlier ones and a certain amount of information is already available. In particular much has been written on the work of Dr. Lee which began in this decade.

So we stop at 1850 and what are our impressions? One thing seems clear, namely, that there was a growing interest in public worship in many quarters in Scotland, together with much dissatisfaction with the general manner of its performance. It has often been suggested that this nineteenth century interest was largely due to the Oxford Movement, but it is clear that the interest in Scotland existed much earlier than that Movement. What aroused the interest is really difficult to trace. There seems little doubt that Scottish Episcopal worship had something to do with it, for many of the critics of Presbyterian worship compared the two to the disadvantage of the latter. Possibly too the spread of education, rising standards of living, and growth in culture, may have had some influence.

Another impression is given by the prayers, that one of the weaknesses of these early service books, especially perhaps with regard to the Communion services, is the extreme wordiness. No doubt that was largely due to the custom of the times, from which the writers, in spite of their desire for improvement, found it difficult to move.

The relation to the Westminster Directory is not easy to assess. That the Directory was very widely ignored was a common complaint, and a few here and there urged a fuller obedience to its provisions. Of positive influence on the aids to worship of our period, there is not much direct evidence. The service books generally adhere to the order of service which was then customary, and that itself is in outline more or less the order of the Directory. The contents of the prayers also adhere on the whole to the suggestions of the Directory. Some of the books, such as Liston's, attempt a more or less literary style which is remote from the simplicity and directness of the Directory, but the attempt is seldom

successful. What is certain is that not one of these books could be used today—the verbose and didactic style both of the prayers and of the sermons make them quite out of tune with modern ideas and needs.

Nevertheless we must be grateful that there were some who were anxious to bring the worship of God to a high level of order and decency. There is no doubt that they would have been glad to know that the movement which they initiated proved to be so fruitful and led to so notable advances later in the century. These pioneers in a Scottish liturgical movement have their heirs to-day on those whose aim it is to lead the worship of the people not only in fine language and excellent style, but above all in spirit and in truth, and in the beauty of holiness.
